VICA

Volunteering In Conflict Areas

TOOLKIT

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

The online training course to improve skills and knowledge in the field of VICA, was a series of online meetings coordinated by CCIVS involving participants from IVS organisations willing to enlarge their understanding and capacity in the coordination of peace projects. Originally, VICA was designed as a multi-activity project, including a training course to be hosted in Serbia in spring 2020, a practical phase in summer and an evaluation meeting in Greece in autumn 2020. Unfortunately the outbreak of the Covid19- pandemic disrupted this plan and the activities of the project had to be converted into online sessions. Nevertheless, participants could benefit from a series of interesting online meetings which allowed the attendance of activists from all over the world.

The first series of five online meetings were held in June and July 2021 and involved participants coming from several European IVS organisations. The sessions were coordinated by the trainers Mauro Carta (Italy) and Jelisaveta Jovanovic (Serbia), with support from two experts, two experts Zainab Mai-Bornu (Leicester) and Yasin Duman (CTPSR), with graphic support from Yorgos Konstantinou. In the

final part of the first series and throughout the second series of meetings, held in autumn 2021, the participants were involved in the development of ideas, contents and contributions which were later used to update the toolkit. In 2008, CCIVS had published the handbook "Conflict & Volunteering – How to deal constructively with conflicts in relation to international voluntary service", whose contents and format needed to be updated and restyled.

This new version includes the contents presented by the two experts in the first series of online meetings together with new descriptions of workcamps in post-conflict and post-emergency areas. While some elements of the previous toolkit have been kept, readers will find new input and key concepts related to conflict theory and more non-formal education tools. Regarding its structure, the publication consists of four parts: a first chapter which defines the IVS approach to volunteering in conflict areas; a second chapter to explore the key concepts and theory concerning conflict; a third chapter with ideas how to plan and coordinate training courses and pre-departure meetings for outgoing volunteers in conflict areas; and a concluding part with updated examples of projects in post-conflict and post-emergency areas coordinated by IVS organisations.

The toolkit is addressed to volunteers and activists willing to experience volunteering in (post) conflict areas; to organisations, trainers, youth workers and educators interested in organising training, seminars and meetings on the topic of volunteering in conflict areas; and of course, to everybody interested in the topic of conflict management and reconciliation.

During the days finalising this publication, we have witnessed the dramatic escalation that led to the conflict in Ukraine. Now more than ever, it is essential to develop instruments which enable us to understand the origin of a conflict and to propose effective reconciliation. Current events confirm that peace cannot be "improvised", but must be implemented through a lengthy and constant daily process of strengthening and monitoring, even in the absence of a tangible conflict. It is a long and hard road, but is the only way to ensure a future of peace and mutual understanding.

Mauro Carta

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International Voluntary Service

1920 The First World War has ended, leaving behind destruction, death, suffering, mourning. The Swiss pacifist Pierre Ceresole and his like-minded companions feel that it is time to transform words into actions. After attending to conferences on peace where they have the chances to shape up their ideas and find supporters, they decide to organise a project in Esnes, near Verdun, on the Franco-German border, in cooperation with the local community. German, French and English volunteers, with the help of many other participants, engage in the reconstruction of the small village reduced to a pile of rubble after the war conflict. Under the motto «deeds, not words», they intend to bring forward an idea which is as simple as provocative: by working to build something together, it is impossible to become enemies. It is mid-November 1920. The first International Voluntary Service (IVS) workcamp[1] is born, and it will not be the last.

One of the most challenging and innovative elements of Pierre Ceresole's intervention is the presence of volunteers coming from countries which fought each other during the war. The work proceeds smoothly for the first months of 1921, but in April, some of the local people express objections towards the German and Austrian volunteers: their presence is perceived as «an insult to the dead of France» and they are asked to leave. Unwilling to split the group, Ceresole and his companions decide to stop the project. Despite this setback, this first attempt illustrated the potential of workcamps and of the international volunteer service. The international volunteers had shown that working side by side to achieve a common task, living, eating and relaxing together enables people to learn to understand each other in a way that no other activity can.

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[1] Service Civile International (SCI) was the name given by Pierre Ceresole to the organisation. Today, SCI is one of the networks which are part of the wider International Voluntary Service movement (IVS).

After the first experience in Esnes and especially after the Second World War, the IVS approach gain more emphasis and more projects are carried out worldwide. Yet, this proliferation of volunteer activity lacks any kind of coordination. At a UNESCO conference in 1948 this problem is addressed by the creation of the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) with an office in UNESCO›s headquarters in Paris, where it is still based. From a mainly European start, membership of CCIVS widen over the years to include new organisations in Asia, Africa, the Americas and in the then socialist countries of Eastern Europe. These organisations have peace and inter-community understanding high on their list of priorities, but they are also concerned with social justice, human rights, the environment and grass-roots development. International workcamps and long-term volunteer exchanges are the principal ways of working towards these objectives.

In first decades of its existence, CCIVS plays a significant role in the days of the Cold War, creating contact and friendship across the «Iron Curtain». Later, with the support of UNESCO, CCIVS organises a number of seminars and workcamps on conflict and peace issues in Africa - in Namibia (1993), Liberia (1997), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2001), Zimbabwe (2003), and Kenya (2004). Over the last 10 years, CCIVS has intensified its engagement in the MENA region (Middle East and Northern Africa), organising networking meetings and initiatives like the recent online conference "Palestinian Youth: Challenges and Opportunities" (December 2021). Many CCIVS member organisations are currently engaged in conflict areas, where they implement activities to raised awareness and to highlight the necessity of finding constructive strategies to deal with conflict.

> **"IF YOU HAVE COME HERE TO HELP ME YOU ARE WASTING YOUR TIME. BUT IF YOU HAVE COME BECAUSE YOUR LIBERATION IS BOUND UP WITH MINE, THEN LET US WORK TOGETHER."**
>
> Aboriginal activist group, Queensland, 1970s

TO LEARN MORE

The SCI Archive

If you want to know more, you can consult the SCI Archive here https://archives.sci.ngo/. Based in the Bibliothèque de la Ville La Chaux-de-Fonds (Switzerland), the archives provide an extensive documentation on international volunteering for peace.

This document gives an insight of the first workcamp in 1920. It is one of the many documents included in the historical archives of SCI. https://qr.page/g/2bHs1hb6k0k

What is an IVS WORKCAMP?

A workcamp is a short-term voluntary action involving a small group of people (usually between 6 and 20 participants) in activities that support a local community project, lasting for one to three weeks. When not specified in the project description, volunteers do not have to meet specific requirements to join a project. A workcamp include participants of all ages (children can join if accompanied by their parents or tutors) and from all over the world. Food, accommodation and insurance are provided by the hosting organisation, whereas volunteers cover the travel costs and the registration fee.

Workcamps in Asia, Africa and Central and Latin America can require an additional fee to cover the local expenditures and a pre-departure training. One or two workcamp coordinators, previously trained, support the volunteers taking care of the group dynamics and the conflict resolution process. The learning dimension in a project is ensured by non-formal education methods (NFE), which can include team building sessions, a study part, workshops, visits and debates.

To take part in a workcamp, volunteers choose a project among those displayed by a database managed by the IVS networks and contact the sending organisation based in their country/ region. Once registered and accepted, they received all the details on how to join the venue and prepare themselves to the experience.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Limited resources, impressive results

1920: no internet, less mobility, lower quality of life, language barriers...and yet, Pierre Ceresole & friends set up a functioning and efficient network. How was it possible? In your meetings on peace and conflict resolution (but also on project management) you can invite your participants to reflect on this topic and to compare Ceresole's resources with those available in our times.

Differences between the first workcamp and today's workcamps (table)

If compared with the first one organised in Esnes in 1920, today's workcamps share some common features but differ in new elements, as displayed in the table below:

	First Workcamp in Esnes, 1920	"Modern" workcamps, today
Duration	6 months	From 1 to 3 weeks
Registration process	Candidates had to fill in an application form and were contacted for a face-to-face interview	Volunteers apply online and receive a pre-departure training according to the destination and to the organisation policy
Number of volunteers	The size of the group varied according to the availability of the volunteers	Usually from 6 to 20 volunteers
Volunteer profile	The group included also minors; flexibility and manual skills were requested	International workcamps are open to volunteers from 18 years (16 years for national workcamp). Children can join with their parents/tutors
Roles	Women contributed in the kitchen, men worked in the field and construction area	No separation of tasks according to gender or age

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Are workcamps effective to promote peace?

Yes! Specific research conducted by CCIVS and its networks, in cooperation with academic institutions, show that volunteers taking part in international workcamp at home or abroad rated higher than the others on constructs like conflict management and feelings of social integration. In a workcamp, participants are involved in finding creative and constructive solutions within the protected environment of the camp and community: they are thus encouraged to become actors and mediators of their own conflicts, and potentially of those they face in the society. Furthermore, they have the opportunity to meet, live and work together with people from different culture, a process that allows them to overcome prejudices and to enlarge their horizons.

Source "Just Volunteer 2020-2010 Impact Report"
https://ccivs.org/resources/

TIPS FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) TOOLS

IVS History quiz

If you want to make a presentation about IVS, including its history and the main steps of its development, you can propose a quiz format, for example choosing 1 correct answer out of 4. After each question, you can provide additional information.

Literature and Movie tips

If you want to better understand the historical background of WWI through literature and movies, here are some tips for you:

Movies:
Paths of glory, USA 1957, directed by Stanley Kubrick. Anti-war film based on the novel of the same name by Humphrey Cobb, it stars Kirk Douglas as Colonel Dax, the commanding officer of French soldiers who refuse to continue a suicidal attack.

Books:
All Quiet on the Western Front (original German title: Im Westen nichts Neues), by Erich Maria Remarque, 1929. The book describes the German soldiers› extreme physical and mental stress during the war, and the de-tachment from civilian life felt by many of these soldiers upon returning home from the front.

The IVS approach in conflict areas

Looking back at history, we can say that the IVS movement has a strong link to the concepts of conflict areas, reconciliation, reconstruction and humanitarian intervention. After the first workcamp in Esnes we can mention two significative actions related to this field and carried out by Service Civil International: the humanitarian help provided during the Spanish civil war (1937 – 1939) and during the Algerian independence war (1954 – 1962).

If in Esnes simple clean-up work was needed, in Spain the actions required truck drivers and language skills, whereas in Algeria doctors and teachers were wanted. The main obstacle to deployments in crisis areas today is the necessary professionalization and higher qualification of the volunteers. Over the decades, the IVS networks specialised in the coordination of short-term and long-term voluntary actions which contribute to peace and promotion of human rights through intercultural encounters, awareness-raising and cooperation with the local community. Gradually, IVS developed a specific approach, which is summarised in the review below. It is important to understand the main features of such approach, in order to identify the strengths and limits of IVS actions in the field of volunteering in conflict areas.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo
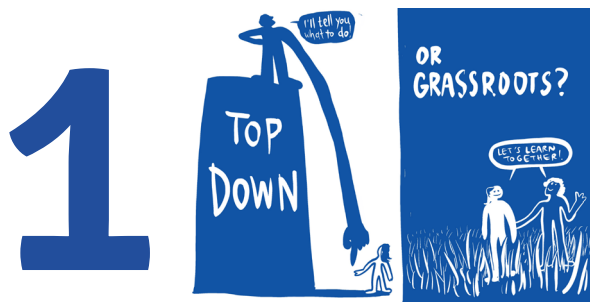
1 Grassroots approach

In IVS projects, volunteers work side by side with the local community. Participatory decision-making and participatory problem-solving process are essential elements of this approach. On the other hand, IVS volunteers are not required to possess specific expertise and procedures, to be deployed in emergency situations adopting a hierarchic, top-down approach.

3 Inclusive approach

In IVS voluntary actions, all volunteers are included. No specific requirement is demanded besides being strong motivated (sometimes previous experience, when requested). Of course, IVS workcamps do not include special actions in emergency areas, where only professionals with specific competences, previous experiences and qualities are involved.

2 Non-formal methods

Trainers, facilitators and workcamp coordinators use NFE tools and instruments (such as energisers, team building sessions, group work etc) to put the participants and the volunteers at the forefront in the learning process and in the evaluation. Research has showed that this is the best approach to foster autonomy, self-esteem and critical thinking.

4 Process-oriented activities

In IVS voluntary actions, the process is as important as the results. Volunteers do not have necessarily to achieve a final result; the learning process is focused on promoting intercultural understanding, critical thinking and raising awareness. Participants are not pushed to compete with one another in order to obtain awards or grades, as a mean to maximise performance and quality.

5 Post-intervention

In IVS workcamps, volunteers are not engaged in activities such as emergency relief, first aid, shelter or health assistance. Nevertheless, they can provide a valuable contribution also in conflict areas. For example, a group of volunteers can support a local community in an area affected by an earthquake, where people live still in tents, to organise art-workshops with the local children, some months after the catastrophic events.

TO RECAP,

IVS volunteering approach in conflict areas includes the following features:

- **GRASSOROOTS, COMMUNITY BASED**
- **NON-FORMAL and INFORMAL**
- **INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE**
- **PROCESS-ORIENTED (more than result-oriented)**
- **PROVIDES SUPPORT (but not specific interventions during an emergency)**

TIPS FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) TOOLS

Title: Exploring the IVS approach
Ideal for: volunteers pre-departure training, VICA training
Setting: indoor or outdoor
Material: a copy of the 5 cards set for each group, chairs, pens, paper, a flipchart for the final round
Participants: from 10 to 30
Duration: 60 minutes

Instructions:
- Show the cards with the 5 dichotomies (top-down/grassroots, formal/non-formal, restrictive/inclusive, result-oriented/process-oriented, emergency relief/post-intervention).
- In plenary, ask the group to identify the element of each dichotomy that fits to the IVS approach.
- Then, split the group in small teams (minimum 3 participants for each group).
- Give the groups 30 minutes to reflect on the strengths and limits of IVS related to each element.
- Invite a member of each group to briefly share the results in plenary.

TO LEARN MORE

An IVS example of volunteering in conflict areas: GAIA Kosovo projects in Mitrovica

To better understand the specific approach of the International Voluntary Service (IVS) to promote peace, please watch this interesting video featuring Jeremy Flauraud, ESC volunteer in GAIA Kosovo: https://www.facebook.com/ServiceCivilInternational/videos/920403635073958/
Highlight at 8:40 in the video.

This excerpt, transcribed here, illustrates IVS approach on peace-building: **"Part of our work, as volunteers, it's informal, it's actually fun, we are making friends on both sides of the city and then we go to them regularly [...] we invite them to come to the other side with us, and when they feel comfortable enough, they just cross the bridge and they meet other people [...] We've been intermediaries, mediators, between two sides who don't know much about each other"**

More on GAIA activities in Mitrovica:
http://gaiakosovo.org/04/03/2021/finding-new-perspectives-in-the-divide/
https://sci.ngo/vov/paint-the-walls-away-in-mitrovica/

Photo credit: Gaia Kosovo

Exploring conflict

In this part we are going to propose definitions of conflict and of conflict areas. It is essential to define clearly these two concepts, as the succeeding sections, focused on training for volunteers in conflict areas, will be built on the elements presented in this part. The contents of this part include input and materials provided by Dr Zainab Mai-Bornu University of Leicester and Dr. Yasin Duman of Coventry University's CTPSR for the participants of the VICA online training course coordinated by CCIVS in June 2021.

"Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence." Dorothy Thompson

Defining conflict

Conflict takes many different shapes: it may be played out between friends, within an organisation, or between states. It may have various consequences: feelings of frustration and unhappiness, arguments, even violence. There are many different definitions and ideas of what conflict is. Below you will find a few examples.

Conflicts are disagreements that lead to tension within and between people (Danish Centre for Conflict Resolution, 2003)

Conflict is the expression of disagreement over something important to both (or all) sides of a dispute (Peace Pledge Union)

Conflict is part of life. As individuals with different needs, tastes, views, values and personalities, sooner or later we are bound to clash. Its scale may be small or large. Conflict can flare up between neighbours or between countries; cleaning up the kitchen or cleaning up the environment. It happens in the briefest interactions with strangers and in our most intimate relationships (Cornelius & Faire, 2007).

TO LEARN MORE

Etymology for "conflict"

The word conflict has been used in the English language since the 15th century and it is borrowed from Latin conflīctus, meaning «striking together, a clash» and from conflīgere «to strike together, bring into collision, do battle, contend» (in Latin, flīgere means «to strike, dash down»). Synonyms of conflict are: discord, strife, friction, contention, dissension, variance.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Conflict as opportunity

In Chinese, the sign for conflict is made up of the signs of danger and opportunity. This combination reminds us that conflicts, disagreements and struggles are often necessary to avoid apathy, to grow and to take steps forward in life. This applies at many levels: personal, interpersonal, and even between or within groups, whole countries

Dealing with conflicts in intercultural settings

In IVS projects the participants come from diverse backgrounds, with different habits and ways of communicating. Some of these differences can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. When somebody acts in a way that is completely normal in their culture, it can be understood by someone else as an offensive act which could set off a conflict.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

Since IVS projects take place in an intercultural environment, many conflicts that occur have a cultural dimension. Culture determines people's way of life. There are national and regional cultures but as mentioned earlier, there are many other aspects that influence a person's cultural identity - age, family history, sex, religion, educational background, socio-economic class, hobbies. Cultural differences do not automatically lead to conflict: this depends on how you view your own culture. «Cultural» conflicts can thus arise through stereotypes, prejudices and ignorance of other people or cultures. A reason for conflict may be a lack of respect for others beliefs or values, or the feeling that your family or religious values or gender role are threatened. In conflicts connected to cultural differences, the question is how you relate to the differences, rather than the differences themselves.

In a culturally diverse environment, conflicts due to misunderstandings, different values, prejudices etc. often take place. Such differences can be seized as valuable opportunities to enlarge our cultural horizons, meeting the challenge without fear. The way to understand and deal with conflict is different, depending on the cultural context. Probably most of our proposals are closer to «Western» ideas of conflict resolution. But there are many differing approaches to dealing with conflict around the world. As an example, you would find differences between Western and Arab-Islamic conflict resolution. The way to understand and deal with conflict is different depending on the cultural context and there are many differing approaches around the world. In specific regions, conflict

resolution methods might have an individual, rationalist based approach, whereas in other parts of the world the approach can be more collectivist, calling upon religious and traditional values. Communication styles may differ as well: you could find more confrontational styles and less direct and straightforward ways to address conflict. Especially when you work in a culturally diverse environment, it is important to recall that we have different habits of how we deal with conflict, and we should not try to impose our method on others. There is not just one correct approach. You should be careful not to impose your own way of dealing with or resolving conflict in a culturally diverse environment.

To resolve a culturally defined conflict, cultural similarities and differences should be studied to avoid preconceptions and stereotypes and to develop a common approach. To be able to mediate in conflicts in intercultural settings, there are two useful skills. First, to have some knowledge about the cultures involved (a rational approach) in order to be able to see and understand culturally defined assumptions (see picture 1 below). Secondly, and perhaps more crucial, is the ability to understand how a particular situation can elicit a wide variety of different feelings and emotions among participants and bystanders. Conveying that understanding to the parties to a conflict encourages reconciliation and promotes true intercultural learning (see picture 2)
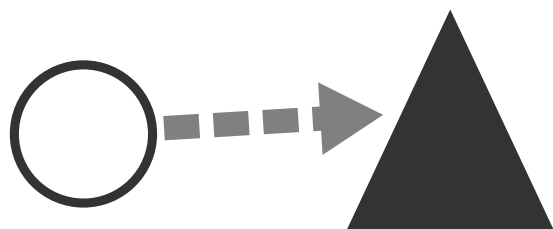
picture 1
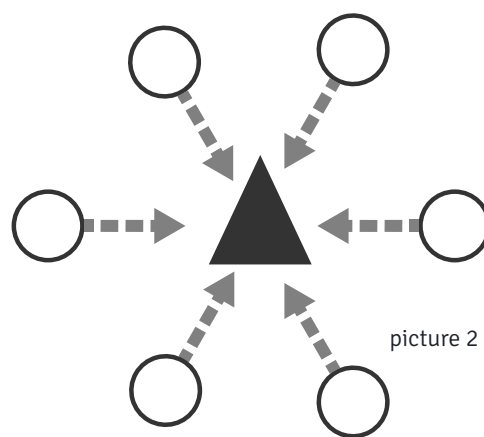
picture 2

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Example of conflicts and misunderstandings from real experiences in IVS projects

Hello and Goodbye

At the end of a successful training course in Europe, participants hug and shake hands. A Muslim participant from the Middle East avoids physical contact and she is perceived as "strange" by the group. A male participant approaches her and without asking her permission tries to hug her, but she rejects him. This behaviour leads to discomfort in the group. In certain societies, males and females often do not physically touch in greeting: a proper familiarity with this cultural feature could have helped the group to set the proper modality for handling the "farewell" scenario.

Relaxation in a sauna

In a project in a Scandinavian country, the hosting organisation has arranged a "sauna session" every evening for relaxation after the daily activities. The local participants are totally familiar with this cultural practice and have no problem in enjoying the sauna together (boys and girls), completely naked. However, other participants, especially the youngest ones from Mediterranean countries, who have never experienced a sauna before, do not know how to behave and feel uncomfortable. The local participants do not understand their objections and expect them to join, naked. Instead of forcing people to join, it would have been more constructive to have explained the historical development and cultural importance of the "ritual" and then to have given everybody a choice. For example, by creating three shifts, one for boys, one for girls and one mixed, an opportunity would have been given to participants to choose and adapt gradually to the new experience

Some of the misunderstandings and conflicts in international projects are linked to misconceptions about cultures, or the non-acceptance of other cultural values. This is why transformation of conflicts in the context of IVS is closely linked to intercultural learning. If you are able to transform a «cultural» misunderstanding into a learning experience, where the parties succeed in realising things about their own and other cultures, you will improve the participants' intercultural competence and increase their intercultural understanding.

To deal with conflicts in a culturally diverse environment, you need to have some knowledge about the cultures involved and be able to see the conflict from all angles.

TO LEARN MORE

Conflict triangle

Conflict triangle

Professor of Peace Studies Johan Galtung has introduced the idea of a Conflict Triangle (Galtung, 1969), or ABC Triangle (see figure below). This analysis is based on the premise that conflicts have three major components: contradiction (conflict issue), attitudes and behaviour. These three components are interlinked and represented graphically as the corners of a triangle. A contradiction (C) may result in a feeling of frustration, which, in turn, may lead to negative attitudes (A) towards the other individual or state, which in turn can lead to a behaviour (B) of verbal or physical violence. Then the behaviour may influence or reinforce the contradiction, etc., etc. The three corners are thus interrelated and influence each other, which is why you can see arrows pointing in opposite direcions between the different corners.
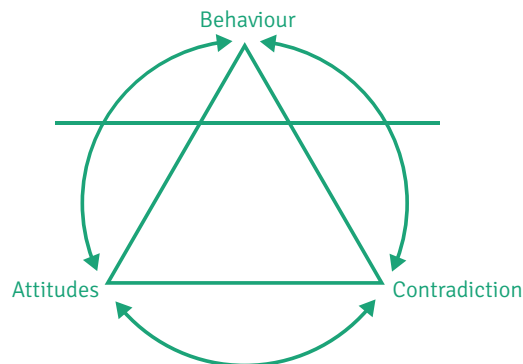
The dynamics of a conflict are often compared to an iceberg of which the major part is under water and remains unseen. It is only the behaviour of the actors that is shown (the «tip» of the iceberg), whereas the underlying attitudes are not visible (the «bottom» of the iceberg). The «tip» is thus found on an observable level, whereas the non-observable part of the iceberg represents the psychosocial level. To understand a conflict properly, remember that not all aspects of a conflict are visible; try also to «look underwater». A conflict is thus composed of many layers and aspects.

Conflict area: a broader definition

Conflict areas are contexts where intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, organisational, and international conflicts occur when incompatible goals develop between persons, groups, or nations.

Competition for resources or other interests, value differences or dissatisfaction with basic needs, are the main reasons behind conflicts. Incompatible economic and political interests may result in an attempt to suppress other groups either with threats or with an actual use of force.

Therefore, a conflict area does not necessarily have to be a place torn by violence, war, destruction or explicit military conflict. On the contrary, it can be any place affected by any kind of conflict. Examples are: the USA as a a conflict area due to racial conflict and discrimination, Spain due to ethnic conflict and the question of independence for Catalunya, and Greece and Italy due to migration-related conflict. Further, small and secluded communities could also be areas of conflict due to issues related to gender inequality, discrimination, homophobia and violence against women. It follows that one of the most prevalent conflict areas around the world is the family.

When, in 2021, CCIVS organised its online training course on Volunteering in Conflict Areas, the broad definition proposed above was presented in a clear way. Such clarity is important for activists and organisations willing to commit in this field and to adopt the approach described in part I of this publication. If an organisation intends to engage with conflict, it is not necessary to intervene in contexts affected by violence and military confrontation. Conflicts can be found in several situations where IVS activists, thematic groups and associations can offer a valuable contribution to reconciliation, resilience and human rights.

This is the reason why at the second meeting of the online training, the experts invited participants to reflect on the following questions:

What are the relationships between:

conflict and MIGRATION?
conflict and THE ENVIRONMENT?
conflict and GENDER?
conflict and ETHNO-RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES?

TO LEARN MORE

Conflict, gender and environment: Women in the Niger Delta region

As an example of the interconnections between conflict and other social phenomena, the experts of the VICA training course focused on the links between conflict, gender and environment, showing an interesting documentary concerning research conducted by Dr Zainab Mai-Bornu "Bringing women voices back: gender and oil conflict in the Niger Delta".

The research focuses on conflicts in the Niger Delta area causing concern at both local and international levels. In this region of Nigeria, sitting directly on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean, the pollution of the marine environment has depleted the fishing and water resources that people have traditionally depended on for their livelihood. The delta is a petroleum-rich region and has been the centre of international concern over pollution principally caused by major oil spills by multinational petroleum industry corporations. Women in the Niger Delta have played a key role in organising important protests and in adopting nonviolence strategies to raise awareness of environmental degradation and underdevelopment. Ogoni women, for example, have experienced, first-hand, violent reprisals instigated by the Nigerian security forces. Yet, women›s› voices within the context of the nonviolent aspect of the conflict are absent from the literature. The research aims at casting a spotlight on this group: what are the conflict related experiences of the Ijaw and Ogoni women? What future roles could the women in the Niger Delta play to advance a nonviolent agenda? A meeting of the VICA online training course gave participants the opportunity to know more about this issue and to understand the roles played by women in this scenario and the links existing between conflict, gender and environment.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

Conflict Management

Is conflict always a problem? Should we make efforts to avoid it in any case? Is a world without conflict necessarily a peaceful and fair place? If we look at human history, we might learn that conflict is not a negative element: it can generate opportunities for growth and development; it can push people to overcome obstacles and to improve mutual understanding; it can lead to a more sustainable way to deal with resources. Of course, in order for the conflict to become an asset, we need to learn how to manage it properly and constructively. In this context, it is essential to differentiate between violence and conflict: all our efforts should converge in the attempt to prevent, not conflict itself, but violence, abuse and aggression.

However, this does not mean that conflict cannot degenerate into violence. According to Fisher's definition, violence consists of "actions, words, attitudes, structures or systems that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damage and/ or prevents people from reaching their full human potential "(Fisher et al. 2000)". The use of violence might occur in the following scenarios:

- when a party intends to force its interests on others, as an instrument of oppression;

- when violence is the only "language" used by weaker parties involved in a conflict, as a way to push forward their position. This might happen when such parties do not know alternative methods of expressing their needs;

- when the parties involved in a conflict fail to find other strategies to overcome the problem (such as dialogue, mediation, negotiation, compromise etc);

- when the conflict escalates and reaches a "point of no return";

- When not properly managed, when ignored or when underestimated, conflicts tend to escalate. Authors and researchers have observed and analysed the process of conflict escalation, creating some effective models which allow us to better identify all the steps involved. Among several models developed in this field, the best known are the ones proposed by Glasl.

TIPS FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) TOOLS

If your training course includes sessions on conflict, it would be worthwhile to add details of the process of conflict escalation, using visual techniques. Glasl's and/or Afbeelding's models may be presented on a flipchart or as a slide show, drawing attention to the incremental process. To make the sessions more interactive, present participants with short descriptions of each of the various stages through which a conflict escalates, but in random order. In small groups or individually, invite them to identify the correct order.

Below is a representation of the two models:

1. Glasl›s model of conflict escalation (Glasl 1999) («Konfliktmanagement. Ein Handbuch für Führungskräfte, Beraterinnen und Berater», Friedrich Glasl, 1999 - see www. cleconsulting.com.au for more details of the stages.)
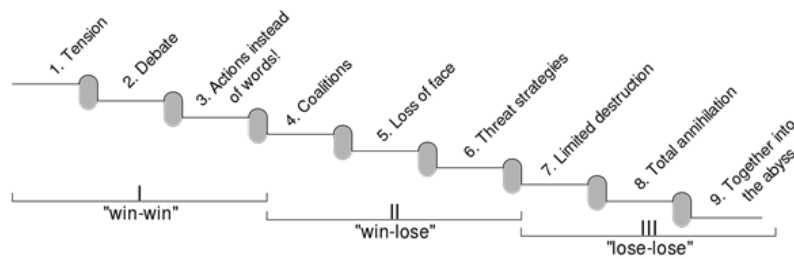
2. A similar popular model
 (see www.educationforpeace.com)

- Polarization
- Open hostility
- Enemy images
- Dialogue is abandoned
- The problem expands
- Personification
- Disagreement

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

Conflict area: a broader definition

Knowing the "escalation stages" illustrated above will allow us to better detect the onset of a conflict and to take measures to avoid its most negative impact. However, a "theoretical" knowledge of this process is not enough to avoid the situation degenerating: if we aim at reconciliation and cooperation, we need to adopt specific strategies to manage the conflict in a constructive way in order to achieve a positive outcome. In the following paragraph, we will analyse some important elements in conflict management.

- Active listening
The way to improve listening skills is to practice «active listening.» This includes making a conscious effort to hear not only the words that another person is saying; more importantly, it is about perceiving correctly the complete message being communicated. In order to do this, it is necessary to pay attention to the other person very carefully. A strategy can help in cases when it is particularly difficult to concentrate on what someone is saying: we can try repeating their words mentally as they say them. This will have two positive effects: to reinforce their message and to help us stay focused.

- Assertive communication
Being assertive is not just about expressing our rights; it is also about increasing the efficiency of our communication with others. Assertive communication helps us increase our confidence in dealing with potentially aggressive people. It can be placed in a middle ground between passive and aggressive behaviours:

- we can adopt passive forms of behaviour when we are criticised, but we do not react because we feel intimidated or we are not sufficiently self-confident to stand by our opinions;

- on the contrary, we may respond aggressively to a situation when we feel hurt and we express our thoughts emotionally, becoming angry and loud.

Even if these reactions are situated at two opposite extremes of a spectrum, they posses a common feature, exhibiting a lack of effective and constructive communication skills. By practising the art of assertiveness, we can improve our abilities to interact with other people in conflicting contexts, and contributing to an improvement in the situation.

A very effective technique for practising assertiveness is the so-called "XYZ" strategy. Whenever we meet a conflict situation or a discomforting social scenario (for example, when we are accused, criticised, put down), we can take three steps to face the challenge:

1) Describe the conflicting or discomforting situation (X) to the people involved ("this is what happened, according to my point of view")

2) Tell the people how this specific situation makes you feel (Y), without accusing them. The focus is on your feeling and on the situation (This makes me feel [excluded, disrespected, sad, ...])

3) Propose a solution or a change (Z) in order to start a dialogue that will engage all parties in finding a solution or in raising their awareness of your position in the future (I would prefer / I would have preferred, if you had done Z).

- Fair distribution of resources
One of the causes that can trigger the process of conflict escalation is the unfair distribution of resources. This can arise on a large scale (think about the exclusion of groups from access to natural resources) but it can also happen in our daily life. An example might be an unbalanced distribution of time, information or equipment among the staff members in an office. If a person involved in this scenario perceives herself/himself ignored, exploited
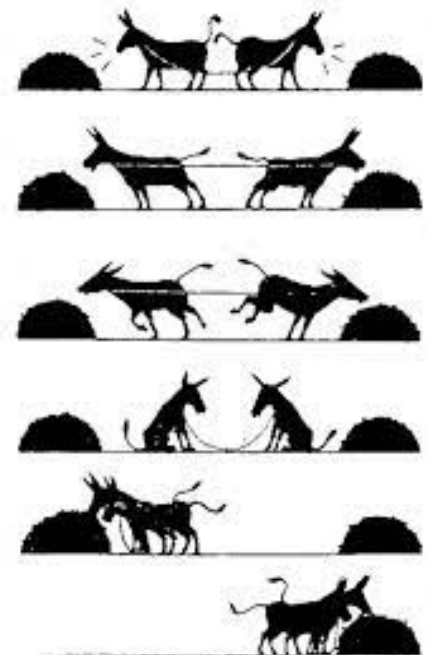
or abused, the reaction can result in open conflict, which will be difficult to manage. When dealing with resources, it is thus essential to make sure that they are fairly distributed, managed and used.

This process takes time and energy, but it can be surprising to discover that very often we possess enough resources to meet our needs. The problem is not one of "quantity", but of the way they are handled and distributed. Equity is achieved by adopting the principles of cooperation, coordination and sustainability.

TIPS FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) TOOLS

The chair game

This is a game trainers or facilitators can propose to a group to reflect both on how a conflict develops, and on conflict transformation, communication and a fair distribution of resources. It is ideal for groups involving from 15 to 25 participants and it can be performed outdoors or indoors (if you have a large working space), keeping your group engaged for 45/30 minutes. You will need a number of chairs equal to the number of participants.

First step: create small cards to be handed to the participants. Each card contains a specific task that each participant has to accomplish. If your group size is 20, you can distribute the cards as follows:

- 8 times "Take ALL the chairs to build a circle";
- 8 times: "Bring ALL the chairs to XY" (= the tree, the street light, a spot which is a minimum of one minute's walk from the point where you placed the chairs)
- 4 times: "Make 5 people sit down on the chairs"

Second step:

- place all the chairs together (preferably outside) and place them in the middle of your venue; make sure that the participants do not see you doing this;
- gather the participants around the chairs; the chairs may have been placed randomly or piled on top of one another;
- distribute the cards and inform participants that from now on they are neither allowed to speak nor to show their card to one another; make sure each participant has understood her/his task;
- provide the group 10 minutes to accomplish the tasks.

Third step
- now the participants will try to fulfil their task and a little "war" for the chairs will start;
- the solution of the game consists in accomplishing the three tasks: to bring all the chairs to the pre-defined spot, to place them in a circle and to have all participants sat down. When this scenario occurs, you can conclude the game and invite participants to come back to the plenary.
- If they do not manage to accomplish the tasks in the allotted time, you can end the game.
- Start the debriefing session. As in every simulation game, you should first give the participants the possibility to express their feelings on what they have just experienced. Give them the time together to reflect slowly on the situation, in order to reach a conclusion.
- Ideally, the aim of the game is to develop a solution together and to realise that their tasks (which can be considered also as their needs) are not contradictory. In order for them to understand this, they need to find a way to communicate with each other. That communication is crucial, is a very important conclusion. The group may be invited to suggest examples of real conflicts (on micro or macro level) where successful or failed communication has decided the outcome.

TO LEARN MORE

Movie recommendation

A black comedy on marriage reflecting escalation dynamics:

The war of the Roses, USA 1989, This is the story of a happy couple, whose relationship gradually degenerates. The war between husband and wife begins in a lawyer›s office and escalates into a violent, bloody conflict, characterised by anger, bitterness and death.

PART III

Training for volunteers in conflict areas

Since the creation of its first initiative in Esnes near Verdun in 1920, the IVS movement has focused specific attention on the preparation of volunteers. Back then, Pierre Ceresole and friends carefully verified the motivation and skills of those who wished to take part in their initiatives, meeting candidates face to face, interviewing them and providing them with useful information before the activities. The purpose of this process was not to create an "exclusive" group or to make a strict selection, but to evaluate together if the volunteers, especially the youngest ones, had the capacity to face the challenges they would have met during an intervention in a conflict area.

These procedures have become an integral part of IVS organisations. All over the decades, through exchange of good practice, common evaluation and synergies, IVS members have developed effective predeparture training courses addressed to any kind of volunteers, including those joining short and long term voluntary activities in conflict areas. We remind here that the IVS approach, as described in Part I of this toolkit, has its own specificities: IVS volunteers in conflict areas are not directly deployed to deliver immediate relief and to respond to natural catastrophes, emergencies or war scenarios; they rather take part in a later stage, to provide coordinated support to post-intervention activities, which might be organised in areas previously affected by conflicts, natural disasters, humanitarian issues (see Part IV for concrete examples).

The preparatory training for IVS volunteer is essential for supporting them in the early steps of their experience. The contents of the training aim to support volunteers to understand the core elements of the activity (be it a workcamp or a long term assignment), and to reflect on crucial aspects related to global issues and volunteering, such us the concepts of development, decolonisation process, environmental sustainability, gender equality, climate justice, promotion of peace and human rights.

Through this approach, volunteers are stimulated to reflect on their role in the project and on the concrete contribution they can offer to become actor of change. In addition to that, IVS volunteers increasex their awareness on dynamics such as "voluntourism" and benefit from opportunities to better understand the IVS approach to volunteering. Finally, during a pre-departure or preparation training course, participants might have the chance to meet volunteers who have already gained experienced in a specific region or topic. These spaces encourage volunteers to share, to reflect on past experiences and to use peers as resources, gaining confidence throughout the training and getting more familiar with tools and strategies which will be instrumental to overcome challenges during their future volunteering.

"An eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind."

Mahatma Gandhi

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Voluntourism

In recent years, more and more platforms have appeared offering volunteer programs for all ages. The growing supply of opportunities might create confusion among volunteers and activists, as it can be difficult to detect the weaknesses and the strengths of programmes which offer several benefits, but at the same time feature controversial elements.

For example, volunteers might have legitimate questions on the vision, mission and values of certain agencies which are not always clear and transparent; also, some programmes might be too much centered on the participants to the detriment of a real impact on the local community; even worse, there might be projects which contribute to a private business or to the financial sustainability of the sending organisation only, but do not offer any support to the hosting organisation. To avoid losing our sense of direction when facing the plethora of offers available out there, it is useful to understand some basic differences between "real volunteering" and the so-called "voluntourism".

VOLUNTEERING	VOLUNTOURISM
Short, term and medium projects whose main objective is to volunteer	All those collaborations that are carried out taking advantage of a trip whose main objective was tourism
The volunteers dedicate their day to work in order to help and give tools to local people to generate change	The purpose is not the development of any society, but to make it possible for the client to live a life-changing experience, to have an adventuring and "to do something good"
The project is coordinated by non-profit organisations working with their local community	It Is a concept create to meet a growing demand in society for people who wish to make a difference. The market has been able to focus on this desire and, in exchange for money, companies offer voluntary programmes moving massive capitals
The impact on the community and on the volunteers goes beyond manual actions. They both benefit from intercultural learning, active citizenship and transforming mindsets	It can have a negative impact on the local community such as loss of jobs options. It perpetuates the idea of top-down approach and relations between rich and poor.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

Training for volunteers in conflict areas:
"weekend format"

Here is a standard programme for a training course featuring non-formal education sessions addressed to volunteers willing to take part in projects in conflict areas. It is specifically designed for short meetings, lasting maximum 3 days, that can be organised over a weekend, with around 30 / 20 participants. It is suggested to include at least 2 experienced trainers (if the group is large), supported by additional team members to arrange logistics. This kind of training requires large working spaces (preferably outdoors), chairs, table and material. Insurance, meals and coffee breaks should be provided by the hosting organisation.

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Morning session 1		Essential skills for volunteering in conflict areas	Emotional dimension in volunteering in conflict areas
Morning session 2		Code of conduct, resources to support volunteers	Meeting with former volunteers to share experience and ask questions
Afternoon session 1	Arrivals, check in, welcome, getting-to-know-each-other, programme	Effective communication in intercultural settings	Learning opportunities, setting realistic expectations
Afternoon session 2	The IVS approach, expectations, team building session	Conflict management and problem-solving	Final evaluation
Evening	Definition of learning goals (pairs/groups)	Reflection (pairs/groups)	Departures

DAY 1

Introductory sessions

The main purpose of such activities is to allow participants to feel more comfortable within the group. Usually, these games are proposed at the beginning of a morning session, possibly outdoors. They should be entertaining, dynamic, interactive, their instructions easy to understand; they should be effective in creating a constructive, safe and friendly environment that will maximise the learning experience in the following sessions. Among these sessions, you can also plan a presentation of the programme and its aims, and an activity to share expectations concerning

the learning objectives set by the participants.

Defining the training "philosophy" and the IVS approach

On day 1 of the training, it is important to share details on the IVS approach, in order to highlight its specificities and to help participates calibrate their expectations concerning their future involvement in short or long term voluntary experiences. Different resources can be proposed: a quiz (see box: IVS History Quiz on Part I, p. 11) a session to analyse IVS main elements (see box: "Exploring the IVS approach on Part I, p. 12); a presentation to specify the differences between the IVS approach and "voluntourism" (see box on page 27 in this part).

These activities can be followed by a team building session, which can be aimed at improving cooperation skills and/or encouraging critical thinking among the participants. An example can be "The Chair Game" (see box on Part II, page 25) which stimulates reflection on cooperation and conflict transformation and can be an effective activity to introduce topics to be further explored in the following sessions. It will be possible to propose team building sessions purely focused on collaboration and team work, such as the well-known "Spaghetti Tower Marshmallow Challenge", which encourages participants to work together and find creative solutions to achieve

a common task (here you can find resources and instructions: https://tinkerlab.com/spaghetti-tower-marshmallow-challenge/)

Reflection spaces

You can conclude the first day providing the guidelines for the reflection spaces. You can create pairs or small groups, who will meet in the evening of day 1 and day 2 to discuss the learning objectives, the needs and the expectations. The feedback from the reflection will be useful for the trainers to finetune contents, methods and presentation style to the preferences of the participants.

DAY 2

Competences, knowledge, attitudes to volunteer in conflict areas

Pre-departure training, seminars and preparation meetings for volunteers always include sessions focused on the necessary skills to face the forthcoming experience. Consequently, a VICA training should propose specific spaces where participants are invited to discuss these topics, reflecting on their current abilities and on how to improve them before, during and after their volunteering.

Several programmes put a special emphasis on the learning process

and on the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes of the outgoing volunteers. Of course, this is an essential element in a training, but a clarification is needed: according to the IVS approach, the personal skills development is as important as the impact on the local community, the coherence of the activities, the ethical dimension of the project and the group dynamics. It would be a mistake to present the voluntary experiences as a sort of a background in which individuals are offered opportunities for their personal and professional growth. By adopting this approach, we risk to consider the voluntary projects as instruments aimed at achieving personal strategic goals or making steps forward to improve participants' careers and CVs. We should not forget that the most relevant aspect of an IVS volunteer experience, and especially those in conflict areas, should be to trigger change and transformation in cooperation with local communities and to de-construct mainstream principles leading to xenophobia, intercultural stereotypes, racism, militarism, nationalism, white supremacy, depletion of natural resources. This does not mean that the learning and skills development process are secondary: all these dynamics acquire a stronger relevance when they are strictly connected with the vision, mission and values of the voluntary actions.

TIPS FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) TOOLS

Introducing the discussion on VICA skills

	Highly relevant - Essential	Moderately relevant - Optional	Not so relevant - Not strictly necessary
Empathy, Learning skills	100% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Being fit*	20% (2)	40% (4)	40% (4)
Knowledge of the context	80% (8)	20% (2)	0% (0)
Knowledge of the local language	50% (5)	40% (4)	10% (1)
Conflict solution skills	50% (5)	50% (5)	0% (0)
NFE tools (games, energisers, team building, activities...)	30% (3)	30% (3)	40% (4)
Good humour	20% (2)	60% (6)	20% (2)
Theoretical knowledge (conflict theories, history..)	0% (0)	80% (8)	20% (2)
Digital skills	0% (0)	50% (5)	50% (5)
Being able to stand pressure	80% (8)	10% (1)	10% (1)
Sociable, talkative	40% (4)	40% (4)	20% (2)
reliable, trustworthy	100% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Self organised, punctual	70% (7)	30% (3)	0% (0)
Logistic skills	20% (2)	70% (7)	10% (1)
First-aid skills	50% (5)	50% (5)	0% (0)
Leadership skills (motivation, take initiative, pro-active...)	60% (6)	40% (4)	0% (0)
Intercultural skills (knowledge of other languages and cultures)	70% (7)	30% (3)	0% (0)
Creative and artistic skills	10% (1)	50% (5)	40% (4)
Able to drive a pick up truck / shuttle bus	0% (0)	30% (3)	70% (7)
Cooking skills	10% (1)	30% (3)	60% (6)
Flexablity	90% (9)	10% (1)	0% (0)

During the online VICA training, the facilitators invited participants to take part in a quick poll, selecting the skills they thought most relevant when volunteering in a context affected by conflicts. They were asked to place the abilities and attitudes into 3 different "baskets", as illustrated in the picture below. This activity can be proposed digitally but also in face-to-face meetings, using post-its and flipcharts.

Among the five most relevant VICA skills and attitudes, the group placed empathy and listening skills, [being] reliable and trustworthy, flexibility, knowledge of the context, being able to stand pressure. After the poll, the experts presented various sets of skills and participants were invited to discuss them in small groups, taking into account conflict scenarios provided by the facilitators.

What skills do we need when volunteering in conflict areas? Why are they important?

What skills do we need when volunteering in conflict areas? Why are they important? During training courses and pre-departure meetings, these questions can help outgoing volunteers reflect on the challenges they might face in their activities and identify the personal resources they can use in order to adapt to ever-changing scenarios.

The participants of the online VICA training were involved in interactive sessions to discuss this topic and received further information from the experts. Here below, you can see the list with the most important sets of competences and attitudes analysed during the training and divided into clusters.

OBJECTIVE-RELATED SKILLS

- Confidentiality
- Accountability
- Ability to abide to the rules and regulations

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Effective communication
- Cultural awareness
- Language skills
- Intercultural skills

PROACTIVE SKILLS

- Problem solving
- Open mindedness
- Adaptability
- Flexibility

PERSONAL SKILLS

- Commitement
- Safety awareness
- Reliability under pressure
- Resilience
- Empathy

ETHICAL DIMENSION

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Respect
- Transparency

OTHER SKILS

- Computer skills

• Objective-related skills and attitudes

Confidentiality, accountability, ability to abide to the rules and regulations: volunteers should know what to do, when and how, what is expected and not expected from them. A clear definition and understanding of the objectives are essential to provide a valuable support to the project and to draw the boundaries for the volunteers concerning tasks, roles and responsibilities. In turn, volunteers should always abide to the guidelines defined together with the project coordinator and with the hosting organisation. The lack of compensation might generate misunderstandings concerning the accountability of volunteers involving in a project, therefore it is essential to set their expectations and to provide encouragement, coaching and proper training. This process will positively affect the way volunteers understand and perform their role and responsibilities. Of course, the more actively involved in meaningful tasks they will be, the higher their motivation and sense of belonging toward the activities.

• Communication skills

Effective communication, cultural awareness, language skills, intercultural skills: in a professional workplace as well as in voluntary environments, the ability to interact with others is essential. Through volunteering, people learn how to relate to different kinds of people and situations. In addition to that, they have the unique opportunity to develop intercultural and language skills interacting with new cultures and settings. These elements play a crucial role in conflict areas: conflicts are often generated or augmented by misconception, stereotypes and misjudgement, and for this reason it is necessary that volunteers receive support to build a specific cultural sensitivity and awareness. These skills will allow them to better understand the scenarios they are involved in and to constructively interact with the different stakeholders.

• Proactive skills

Problem solving, open mindedness, adaptability, flexibility: scenarios in conflict areas can change rapidly and this requires a strong ability to adapt to the various situations. Volunteers cannot demand that project coordinators or project managers remove all obstacles on their learning path. They need to be proactive, meaning that they should take the lead to manage a situation rather than just responding to it or passively wait until someone else intervene on their behalf.

• Personal skills

Commitment, safety awareness, reliability under pressure, resilience, empathy: When we talk about empathy, we refer to the capacity to relate with others imagining the world from another person's perspective. Volunteering requires high level of empathy, as volunteers' actions might include sharing, helping, supporting. Empathy is the fuel that power such actions, as it inspires us to provide a contribution on behalf of people, groups and communities. Technical competences, like computer skills or the ability to drive vehicles, can be helpful in any voluntary settings, including conflict areas

• Ethical dimension

Integrity, honesty, respect, transparency: in their daily experience, especially those in conflict areas, volunteers are confronted with scenarios that require not only skills and competences, but also attitudes and values. Among them we can mention patience, optimism, respect, courage, generosity, gratitude, kindness and forgiveness. In addition to that, volunteers should behave according to the principles of honesty, integrity and transparency.

• Other skills

In this category we find skills and attitudes that do not directly fall into the previous clusters. Technical competences, like computer skills or the ability to drive vehicles, can be helpful in any voluntary settings, including conflict areas

Code of conduct

The second part of the morning of day 2 can be used to introduce the topic of the code of conduct when volunteering in conflict areas. A code of conduct is a summary of the policies which apply to being a volunteer. This policy sets out the standards of behaviours that the hosting organization expects from volunteers and identifies their rights and responsibilities as a volunteer. Compliance with the code of conduct is one condition of volunteers' involvement in the project and should be regarded as a minimum standard which they should to work to. If volunteers are unsure whether a decision that they are about to make will breach the code of conduct, they should ask their immediate supervisor, team leader or a member of the team.
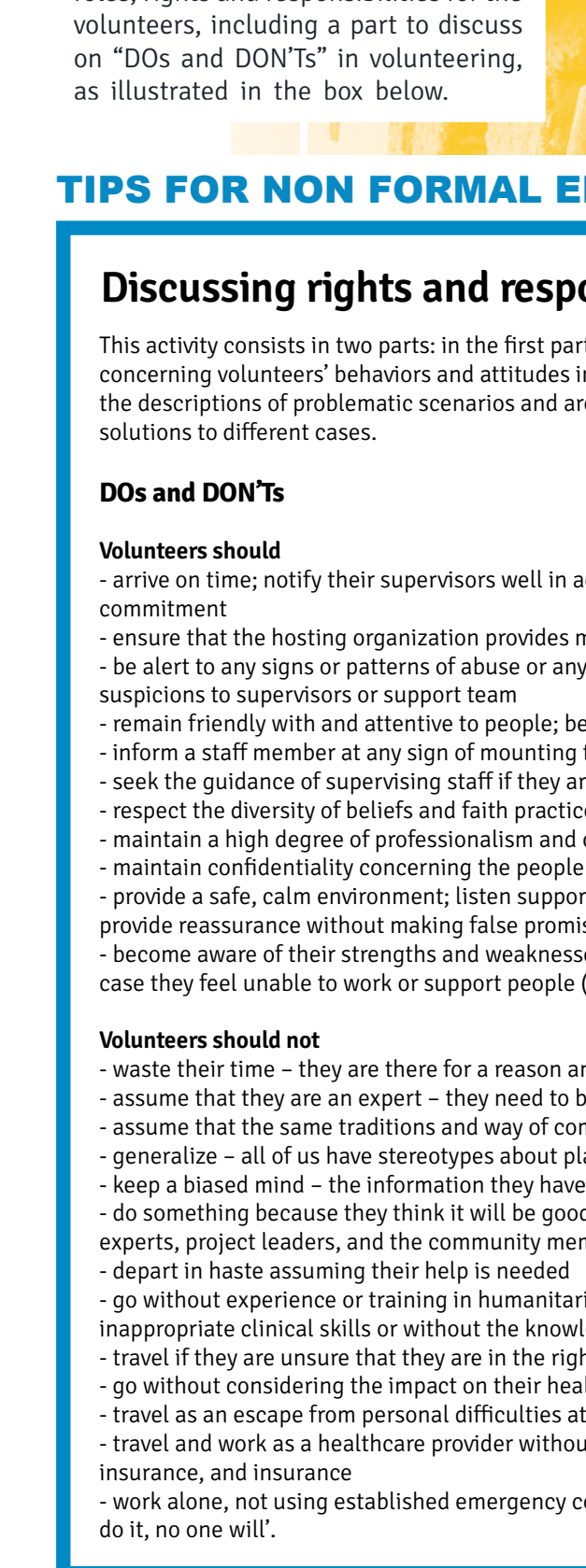
TO LEARN MORE

Here is a code of conduct for volunteers, inspired by the United Nations Volunteers programme, which can be adapted to short, medium and long term voluntary projects in conflict areas.

• Volunteers ensure that they undertake their duties in the interests of the organization/charity they work with and uphold and promote the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct as well as values inherent in volunteerism, such as commitment, engagement and solidarity.

• Volunteers shall uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The concept of integrity includes, but is not limited to, probity (integrity), impartiality, fairness, honesty and truthfulness in all matters affecting their work and status.

• Volunteers are guided by the motivation to devote their knowledge and abilities without regard to financial remuneration. Volunteers shall not use their function for the organization/charity or knowledge obtained therefrom for private benefit of themselves or others, or to the detriment of others.

• Volunteers shall uphold, respect and be loyal to the principles set out in the charter of the organization/charity, including respect for fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of all regardless of their age, gender, and race/nationality/ ethnic or religious identity.

• Volunteers show respect for all persons equally and shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals.

• Volunteers must report any breach of the organization/charity to the officials whose responsibility is to take appropriate action. In particular, volunteers must report any form of discrimination, retaliation or harassment, including sexual or gender harassment, and any form of sexual exploitation and abuse. They are obliged to cooperate with any duly authorized audits and investigations.

• Volunteers must comply with local laws and honour their private legal obligations. Functional privileges and immunities of the organization/charity are no excuse for volunteers to fail to comply with local laws and their private legal obligations.

• In the spirit of respect for all persons, volunteers must not engage in any form of harassment as well as all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse.

• Volunteers are generally required to avoid any action and, in particular, any public statement, which may reflect negatively on the organization/charity, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality that are required by their function for the organization/ charity.

• Unless authorized by the organization/ charity or the host agency, volunteers shall not communicate to any government, entity, person or any other source any information known to them by reason of their function for the organization/charity. These obligations do not end upon separation from the volunteering assignment.

• Volunteers shall not, unless authorized by the organization/charity or the host agency, accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any government or nongovernmental source for activities carried out in the course of their official functions.

• Volunteers are not authorized to speak or write publicly on behalf of the organization/charity unless specifically authorized to do so.

In addition to the presentation of the code of conduct, trainers can integrate the activity with an informative session on roles, rights and responsibilities for the volunteers, including a part to discuss on "DOs and DON'Ts" in volunteering, as illustrated in the box below.

TIPS FOR NON FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE) TOOLS

Discussing rights and responsibilities with scenarios

This activity consists in two parts: in the first part, the trainers present the "DOs and DON'Ts" concerning volunteers' behaviors and attitudes in their project; in the second part, participants receive the descriptions of problematic scenarios and are invited to discuss in small groups to propose their solutions to different cases.

DOs and DON'Ts

Volunteers should
- arrive on time; notify their supervisors well in advance if there is any problem in meeting their shift commitment
- ensure that the hosting organization provides minimum security standards
- be alert to any signs or patterns of abuse or anything that may concern them and always raise their suspicions to supervisors or support team
- remain friendly with and attentive to people; be the best listener they can be
- inform a staff member at any sign of mounting tension
- seek the guidance of supervising staff if they are not sure how to handle a situation
- respect the diversity of beliefs and faith practices of people and volunteers
- maintain a high degree of professionalism and clear boundaries
- maintain confidentiality concerning the people the organization serves
- provide a safe, calm environment; listen supportively; demonstrate compassion and non-judgment; provide reassurance without making false promises
- become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and inform their team members and supervisors in case they feel unable to work or support people (e.g., physical, social, psychological issues)
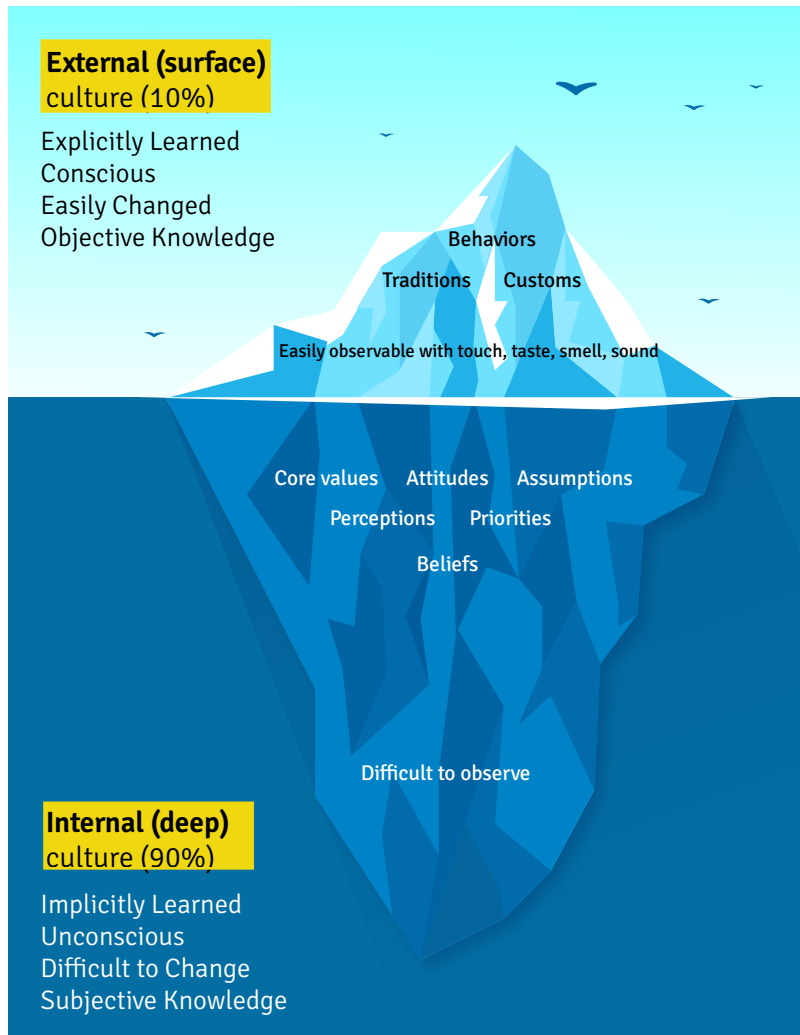
Volunteers should not
- waste their time – they are there for a reason and people need their support
- assume that they are an expert – they need to be attentive to rapidly changing situations
- assume that the same traditions and way of communication apply everywhere
- generalize – all of us have stereotypes about places and people
- keep a biased mind – the information they have may not be true, so they should keep their mind open
- do something because they think it will be good – they should always engage in action with local experts, project leaders, and the community members
- depart in haste assuming their help is needed
- go without experience or training in humanitarian or resource-constrained environments, having inappropriate clinical skills or without the knowledge or skills to adapt to an emergency environment
- travel if they are unsure that they are in the right frame of mind to work under sustained stress
- go without considering the impact on their health, personal life, family, and financial circumstances
- travel as an escape from personal difficulties at home
- travel and work as a healthcare provider without the appropriate vaccinations, medications, health insurance, and insurance
- work alone, not using established emergency coordination and referral systems, assuming 'if we don't do it, no one will'.

Effective communication in intercultural settings

The first session of the afternoon of day 2 can be focused on the topic of intercultural communication. This module can be structured in different activities: a presentation, to introduce the topic (see box below) and to illustrate the "iceberg of culture"; and an interactive role-play game, to encourage reflection on the impact of cultural elements in communication.

External (surface) culture (10%)

Explicitly Learned
Conscious
Easily Changed
Objective Knowledge

Behaviors
Traditions   Customs

Easily observable with touch, taste, smell, sound

Core values   Attitudes   Assumptions
Perceptions   Priorities
Beliefs

Difficult to observe

Internal (deep) culture (90%)

Implicitly Learned
Unconscious
Difficult to Change
Subjective Knowledge

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The following list can be read together to introduce the topic of intercultural communication:

- There are some basic differences in the ways people of different cultures communicate, such as through the different use of words, voice pitch, and nonverbal (body language).
- Within each culture, there are individual differences in the way people communicate.
- In communicating with someone of a different culture, it is important to make sure you consider the person›s cultural background.
- You need to be flexible in your communication style if you want to relate positively to people of different cultures.
- There are limits to how much someone should try to shift his or her communication style to be like someone who is culturally different.
- Openness, caring, and mutual respect for the dignity of individuals are essential qualities for effective communication, regardless of cultural differences.
- There are great advantages throughout your life to being knowledgeable, respectful, and open toward others who are culturally different from you.

The introduction can be followed by a session to present the "Iceberg of culture". This is a model developed by anthropologist Edward T. Hall to explain that organizational culture is like an iceberg found in polar seas: nearly 10% of the iceberg is visible above the water surface, while most of it is hidden below the waterline. According to Hall's model (Hall, 1976), culture has two similar components: a small external part or "surface culture" is easily visible; the majority, or 90%, of culture (internal or deep culture) is hidden below the surface.

Participants can be invited to reflect further on these topics by playing interactive games, such as "Barnga". This is a classic simulation game which can be proposed to explore communication challenges across cultures. During the game, which requires a large room, cards, tables and chairs, participants experience a "cultural shock", realising that in spite of their good intentions, people might understand things differently, especially in contexts involving people from differing cultures. The aim of the game is to learn that mutual understanding and reconciliation are essential elements to function effectively in a cross-cultural group (Sivasailam Thiagarajan & Raja Thiagarajan, 2006).

Conflict management and problem-solving

In this session, the trainers can present the basic concepts related to conflict, using the resources illustrated in part II of this toolkit: definitions, concept theories, models of conflict escalation. After the presentation, participants can be split in small groups, to discuss scenarios featuring conflict situations which might occur when volunteering in conflict areas. The contexts might be set in the organisation office or on the field, and can involve volunteers, staff members, institutions, the local community. The participants can be invited to perform the solution through a role-play game, or to simply present their potential solution in plenary and receive feedback from the whole group. This module can be linked to additional topics, such as assertive communication and non-violent communication as instruments to overcome obstacles and achieve common goals in a cooperative and constructive way.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

DAY 3

The final day of a weekend-training can include 4 additional sessions: a space to discuss the emotional dimension in volunteering in conflict areas, a meeting with former volunteers to share experience and ask questions (when possible), and a conclusive activity to set learning opportunities and realistic expectations concerning the forthcoming voluntary experience or assignment. After these units, the trainers can collect feedback from participants through an evaluation session.

Emotional dimension in volunteering in conflict areas

Volunteering in conflict areas usually requires a lot of psychosocial dedication. Volunteer may encounter sad, disappointing, and discouraging circumstances as well as they do happy, motivating, and satisfactory ones. Volunteers should be able to respond effectively to these different aspects of the work they do in a conflict area. Considering individual differences, they may react to different circumstances in different ways. Therefore, in case they cannot or do not respond to a specific event exactly the same way that their colleagues do, this does not necessarily mean that they possess weaknesses, but they have a different approach, and it may or may not work under certain circumstances.

Advantages and positive feelings	Challenging circumstances and associated feelings
• Feeling a sense of meaning and appreciation • Developing and maintaining a social circle network • Spending time in social activities with colleagues • Adopting an active life style which contributes to lower blood pressure • Learning problem solving skills increasing self-efficacy • Advancing focusing and commitment • Recognizing diversity and how to be a part of a diverse community • Feeling supported	• Organizational regulations and limitations (such as certain groups or certain type of assistance): feeling restricted • Structural circumstances (such as travel restrictions): feeling disappointed • Interpersonal issues (lack of appropriate guidance and appreciation): feeling dissatisfied • Organizational responsibilities (such as too much responsibility): feeling burnout • Personal challenges (being away from home) difficulties in adopting to a new environment where you may not be able to do your routines

Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time-sensitive

Setting realistic expectations

It might happen that outgoing volunteers tend to be carried away by their enthusiasm towards their voluntary experience or assignment. Passion, values and motivation can act as a strong leverage to fuel their commitment, but it is important to adopt a realistic approach, which will allow outgoing volunteers to better identify learning opportunities according to concrete expectations. In order to achieve this goal, trainers can propose a group or pair work activity to invite participant to apply the SMART model when setting their expectations. SMART goals are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic
- Time-sensitive

Participants can be asked to include as much detail as they can about what they want to achieve, how they want to achieve it, how they will know when the expectations are achieved, and by when they want to achieve it. The interaction in pairs or small groups will encourage a realistic approach, as participants will receive relevant feedback and questions.

PART IV

IVS projects in post-conflict and post-emergency areas

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

"Sometimes the simplest solution out of conflict is becoming someone's friend, instead of saying goodbye forever." Shannon L. Alder

In this part we will discuss and give some examples of IVS projects in post-conflict and post-emergency areas, looking at challenges, outcomes and lessons learned. The scope of projects covers our definition of conflict, including scenarios relating not only to violence, military confrontation and war, but also to migration, environment, gender issues and cultural, ethnical and religious identity.

The purpose of this section is to raise awareness about working in a specific context, casting a spotlight on the essential issues to consider when organising a project in a place that has a history of conflict or that has been affected by an emergency or catastrophic event. We provide further examples illustrating the IVS approach, resources and impact in these contexts, through descriptions of voluntary projects from 2011 to 2022.

PROJECT # 1

- Topic: Promotion of Peace through Cultural Heritage
- Venue: Hebron and Bethlehem, Palestine
- Dates: 23.07 – 02.08.2016
- Project title: Palestine: Past, Present and Future
- Format: International workcamp
- Hosting organisation: IPYL, International Palestinian Youth League
- Partners: Palestine Children's Home Club (Hebron), Battir landscape Eco-Museum Centre (Bethlehem)

International Palestinian Youth League (IPYL)

IPYL was founded in 1997 and is based in Hebron. The organisation aims at empowering Palestinian youth to confront, by means of non-formal educational programmes, intercultural learning, training, media literacy and youth leadership activities, the various economic, social and political challenges facing Palestine in the context of the on-going Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Since its inception, IPYL has participated in hundreds of activities, including international voluntary workcamps in Palestine — and in 68 different countries in the Middle East — youth exchanges, cross-cultural study trips, leadership seminars, think tank groups and community meetings.

Contacts:
website: https://www.ipyl.org; Facebook: https://www.facebook. com/groups/7121851034

The context
The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the world's longest-running and most controversial conflicts. It involves two self-determination movements — the Jewish Zionist project and the Palestinian nationalist project — that lay claim to the same territory. From 1948 to today, the conflict has generated several unresolved issues: refugee crises, occupation of land, access to resources, rise of groups committed to violence, breaches of human rights.

Project description
The workcamp was carried out in two cities, Hebron and Bethlehem, in cooperation with two local partner organizations. International volunteers were involved in manual activities that contributed to the rehabilitation of sites of historical value bearing a strong cultural heritage. Such actions included the restoration of Battir Village's ancient water canals, contributing both to the economic improvement of the area and to providing a natural tourist attraction. Additionally, the workcamp experienced extensive cultural events and meetings with civil society representatives, raising the volunteers' awareness of the history of Palestine and the conflict.

Impact
Civil society in Palestine played, and is still playing, a very important role in the resilience of the people to overcome the challenges presented by the occupation of the country. Employing innovative learning tools, the workcamp was an excellent experience for the volunteers to gain knowledge of an area heavily affected by the occupation and to contribute to its development.

PROJECT # 2

- Topic: Conflicts related to Environmental Management
- Venue: Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya
- Dates: regularly from 2011 to 2017
- Project title: WHV - Masaai Mara, The Great African Rift Valley
- Format: International workcamps following the UNESCO World Heritage Volunteers initiative
- Hosting organisation: Global Voluntary Development Association (GVDA)
- Partners: CCIVS, UNESCO, departments of Forestry and Wildlife, community-based organizations (CBOs)
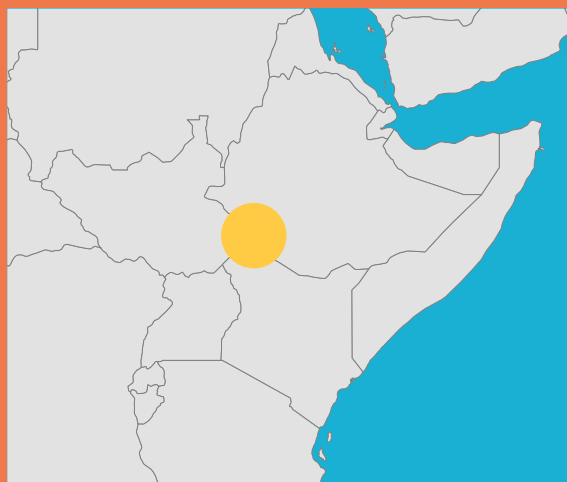
Global Voluntary Development Association (GVDA)

GVDA is an international non-profit organization established in Kenya in 1997. It promotes and organizes voluntary service activities in co-operation with local communities and other national and international organizations. By working, learning and living together it fosters growing confidence between people of different social, cultural, political and religious backgrounds. GVDA is a member of CCIVS and a partner of the Alliance of European Voluntary Organizations and is very active within the Erasmus+ programme.

Context
The Maasai Mara National Reserve in the Great African Rift Valley is the most visited protected area in Kenya, world famous for its high density of herbivores and predators. However, the area suffers from serious human-wildlife conflicts, caused by a rapidly growing human population and accelerating land-use. By involving local and national stakeholders and with the participation of volunteers, the project's main aim was to create a better-maintained biodiversity in which humans and the natural world live in harmony.

Description
Between 2011 and 2017, the project built 54 Manyatta houses in different local communities. A Manyatta, also called a Samburu, is a traditional house constructed from wood and other vegetation found in the locality, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorns, serving to protect the family and their livestock from attack by predators. Volunteers planted local varieties of trees and shrubs and learned traditional construction methods by working with local communities in building a Manyatta. By distributing leaflets in the markets and giving lessons in schools, the volunteers helped to raise awareness about the importance of heritage preservation. They aimed to reduce conflict stemming from the opposing needs of local communities for development, and of the tourist industry and the wildlife reserve for sustainable conservation.

Impact
The local communities were an essential part of this project, directly contributing to different activities, such as teaching Maasai culture and building Manyatta houses. They also benefited from the project, as they learned new conservation skills. Involving the communities in this way helped make them more aware of the need to protect the site and reinforced the sense of collective belonging to their land.

PROJECT # 3

- Venue: L'Aquila, Italy
- Dates: 19-27.06.2011
- Project title: Sbarco GAS 2011
- Format: International workcamp
- Hosting organisation: SCI Italy
- Partners SCI Italy

Topic: Intervention after a Natural Catastrophe (note that the usual term is 'natural disaster'. 'Catastrophe' is not wrong but you may wish to change it.) Although this project does not fall directly into the category of conflict, its description has been included here as an example of IVS activity after a natural catastrophe. The project's logistics, preparation and communication tasks, are similar to those carried out in a VICA project.

SCI Italy is the Italian branch of the Service Civil International (SCI) network. It was founded in 1948, and is recognized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With its main operational headquarters in Rome, the association is supported by various regional and local groups involved in training and the promotion of international volunteering. In Rome, since 2003, SCI has been coordinating an active citizenship and social inclusion project, «The City of Utopia", based in an historical rural house. In line with the network's values, SCI Italy voluntary activities focus on social inclusion, environmental sustainability, the fight against racism, and international solidarity.

Context
On April 6 2009, in the Abruzzi region of central Italy, a series of earthquakes with magnitude 6.3 caused damage to thousands of buildings in the medieval city of L'Aquila. Approximately 1,500 people were injured. Twenty of the 309 fatalties were children.

Description
The implementation of the project was encouraged by local GAS (acronym for "Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale", ethical purchasing groups set up by a number of consumers who cooperate in order to buy food directly from local producers at a price that is fair to both parties). The aim of the initiative was to bring together the national supporters of this economic format in order to attract the attention on the area affected by earthquake, which was still totally disrupted after more than 18 months. Volunteers were involved in the organisation of the area that hosted the event "Sbarco GAS": cleaning the park, renovating the playground for children's games, renovating the drinkable water fountain, supporting the installation of the structures, carrying out logistic tasks.

Impact
The project provided a contribution to the reconstruction of social relations in an area affected by the earthquake, focusing on the development of sustainable socio-economic models. After the tragic event, «New Towns» had been created putting up temporary homes in the suburbs with facilities such as large malls that met most of the immediate needs of the local population but destroyed its social fabric. This failed to address the economic depression of the area. The project ‹›Sbarco GAS 2011›› was part of a broader goal to create a network enmeshing economic stakeholders who grow biological and sustainable products in the region, with GAS, the citizens and other voluntary associations for the reconstruction of sustainable social and environmental relations. The event provided opportunities to explore, disseminate and consolidate this process, through workshops, interactive activities, presentations and debates.

Recommendations for IVS projects in (post) conflict areas

In conclusion, we present some recommendations, which could be seen as guidelines or a "check list" to keep in mind when organising VICA projects. Some of the recommendations are only directed to sending organisations, others to hosting organisations, and some to both. Although additional items can be added in the list, we believe these recommendations are very important and useful to ensure a high quality of project management.

Photo credit: www.archives.sci.ngo

FOR SENDING (S/) AND/OR HOSTING ORGANISATIONS (H/)

1. RIGOROUS CRITERIA/PROCEDURES FOR THE SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS

- 1. S/ To ensure careful selection of volunteers: maturity, expectations, motivation, even minimal conditions, such as previous experience.
- 2. S/ To encourage the long term involvement of the volunteers (e.g. involvement in activities
- before departure and after return).
- 3. S/ To conduct interviews.
- 4. S/ To ensure that the volunteer is not only going to the project to help, but also to learn.
- 5. S/ To take extra care to know the volunteer's motivation: why s/he wants to serve.

2. IMPORTANCE OF THE SECURITY SITUATION

- 1. S/ To verify the security situation through communication with the host organisation
- 2. S/ To make clear that the volunteer must fulfil his/her commitment to the project and avoid too close an involvement in politics.
- 3. H/ In the worst case scenario, to decide to stop the exchange (through a continuous update of the situation).
- 4. H/ To prioritise the personal safety of volunteers at all times.
- 5. H/ To inform the security authorities of the presence of international volunteers.
- 6. H/S/ To make sure there is information of the contact details needed in case of

emergency.

- 7. H/ To make sure there is a Plan B, in case the security situation changes or the project needs to be changed.
- 8. H/ To facilitate the visa process including timely invitation letters.
- 9. H/ To facilitate the volunteer's arrival, welcome and travel to project.

2. 3. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SENDING AND THE HOSTING ORGANISATIONS

- 1. H/S/ To build up a relationship of mutual trust between the two organisations.
- 2. H/S/ To ensure a match of objectives between all parties (including volunteers).
- 3. H/ To provide clear information to the sending organisation and the volunteers (and his/her family), including the programme of activities.
- 4. H/ To provide and adapt criteria or guidelines for the sending organisations.
- 5. S/ To get to know the host organisation in order to measure its capacity to host projects
- (e.g. through visits, communication).
- 6. H/ To get to know the sending organisation in order to measure its capacity to send and prepare volunteers thoroughly for their projects.
- 7. S/ If needed and/or possible, allocate/find funds for host organisations.

4. TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

- 1. S/ To ensure careful pre-departure preparation/training of volunteers (e.g. by involving former volunteers).

- 2. H/ To organise orientation and on arrival training for volunteers.
- 3. H/S To agree on the content and timing of the different training parts so they are complementary.
- 4. H/ To provide a list of resources (articles; websites etc.) about the specific context.
- 5. H/S/ Constantly to revise the preparation information and training, to adjust to changes and new circumstances.
- 6. H/S/ To prepare the volunteers for possible sudden and drastic changes of the situation in the project location and to underscore the importance of following instructions from the hosting organisation and to respect the local knowledge of the situation.
- 7. H/S/ To exchange staff to share best practice and information with the host organisation.
- 8. H/S/ To exchange know-how in general (seminars, training courses, etc).

5. RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE PROJECT

- 1. H/ To encourage a study aspect in workcamps.
- 2. H/ To consider the possibility of medium or long-term exchanges.
- 3. S/ To ensure debriefing possibilities and follow-up for the returned volunteers.
- 4. S/ To encourage and use former volunteers in promotion and preparation of new volunteers.
- 5. H/S/ To work for dialogue between the communities involved in the conflict zone, if the security and general situation allow.

CCIVS

Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service

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